confidence in our force, and a corresponding impatience of demands for more troops. The bloody battles of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks shook this a little, but only for a time, and it was then too late to create a new army for that campaign.

"McClellan was not deceived, but he was helpless. He knew that the rebels on numbered him: and in every war, other things being equal or nearly so, the chances of victory rest with the army which has the highest numbers. He was compelled, therefore, to rely on skill—on preparation and in the last resort on strategy. He knew that his right wing was likely to be attacked and beaten. But he believed that this could only be done by a superior force, and that this force must be drawn from the rebel right. If the enemy strengthened his own left, he would in the same ratio weaken his right wing—and over his right wing lay the road to Richmond. McClellan, therefore, prepared his own right wing for a prompt and safe retreat to the other side of the Chickahominy—prepared the White House for a prompt and cheap surrender, and prepared his left wing for a prompt and overwhelming advance. He had massed there the main body of his army, and nearly all his artillery; had caused roads to be opened, causeways constructed, and every preparation made for advancing cannon, and stood ready to avail himself, at an hour's notice, of the expected transfer of the rebel strength from one side to the other of his lines. He expected to exchange the White House for Richmond, and the bargain was a good one.

"Upon this basis McClellan's plans were faultless. But they took it for granted that he would have to meet only the army which held Richmond. McDowell, Banks, and Fremont were expected to detain Jackson in the Valley of the Shenandoah. Scarcely a week before the crisis came, President Lincoln himself informed McClellan that 1,000 men had been sent from Richmond to reinforce Jackson, and that this was equivalent to adding just so many to McClellan's army. No one thought for a moment that Jackson was to leave the Valley. His whole mission was supposed to be to prevent reinforcements from being sent to McClellan. He did this—and *a good deal more*. For when the attack upon our right wing came, it proved to have been made by Jackson himself. He had swept down with 55,000 men past Hanover Court House—forced our right across the Chickahominy, and was ready to follow them, while the rebel force in front of our left stood there in undiminished strength! In a single day Jackson had added 55,000 men to the rebel Richmond army. McDowell had done for McClellan precisely what Patterson did for McDowell before Bull Run. Jackson had played our army in front of Washington precisely the same trick which Johnson last year played our army at Winchester. He had quit his position, and fallen upon our force before McDowell knew that he was gone.

"McClellan was thus placed in a condition of the utmost peril, from which extrication might seem almost impossible. He had the enemy in overwhelming numbers in front on his right, and rapidly gaining his rear. The sudden resolution which he took, of throwing his whole army over narrow and difficult roads, in face of a powerful, vigorous, and exultant enemy, upon a new base of operations twenty miles away, *will stand as one of the boldest military conceptions ever formed*; while the success with which it was achieved, the steadiness and order of this terrible march, and the admirable behavior of these raw troops, who have not been a year under arms, and most of whom had never been under fire, challenge for the Commanding General and for his officers and men the hearty admiration of the whole country. Pursued by the enemy and forced to face about and fight desperate battles on successive days, Gen. McClellan took away in safety all his stores, drove all his cattle, preserved nearly all his guns, and took up a new position upon a new line of communication with his supplies, from which the most strenuous efforts of the enemy have failed to drive him.

"*Thanks to the generalship and the courage of his soldiers*, the Army of the Potomac is safe. It only remains now to strengthen and sustain it."

Such was the view which the partisans of the Administration then took of the campaign of Gen. McClellan in the Virginia peninsula. Never was a General called to cope with such obstacles, but th se laid in his way by the military authorities in Washington were the most insurmountable. Hence, it was that that intense Republican sheet, the New York Independent, wrote as follows, in its review of this same campaign. We quote from its number of July 17, 1862:

"The people cannot but see that the success of our arms has been in the ratio of their distance from the seat of Government. In all the great West, *where the Government could not meddle*, on the seaboard, in North Carolina, at Beaufort, South Carolina, at New Orleans we have had success. But in Virginia, within reach of the influence of Washington, we have had all our delays and all our misfortunes. Do not the people consider these things? * * *

"The President is understood to have assumed the whole responsibility of the campaign in the East. The people will hold him to that responsibility. The Generals are of his selection. All things are in his hands.

"But one thing is sure, unless there is more purpose and vigor at Washington, all the public meetings in the land will not save this country from shame and disaster.

"We speak plainly, sorrowfully, earnestly. An enemy of the Administration would have no right to speak so. We are friends—all the more because we speak out what millions think, but do not utter, lest it might hinder the cause. But, unless some one speaks, there will soon be little cause left to hinder or to help."

The Boston Daily Advertiser, then as now a partisan of the President, threw the whole blame of the blunders in the Shenandoah Valley (which precipitated the disasters that subsequently overtook Gen. McClellan before Richmond) on the Secretary of War. In its number of May 27, 1862, this "loyal" print wrote as follows:

"Why, then, it will be asked, did the Secretary detach Shields from Banks and order the latter back to Strasburg? We do not undertake to answer the question. Shields was sent to join McDowell, but the country has yet to learn any useful purpose that is served by that great army lying there with no enemy before it, too far from Richmond to co-operate with McClellan, even if there were a disposition to do so, and 'protecting Washington' from access in a direction where the enemy have themselves in their retreat from Manassas destroyed every bridge and disabled every facility of communication which might enable them to advance. But, even if an attack upon Washington were feared, what means of preventing it could be so sure as the appearance of a large combined force at Gordonsville, as was projected? And what exigency pressed for the strengthening of McDowell so urgently as to make it worth while, in order to gain a few days time, to throw away the fruits of the whole campaign in the valley, to demoralize our army by retreat, to lose again our control of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, to expose Maryland to the consequences of a raid and to possible attempts at insurrection, to incur the disgrace of a total failure in Virginia, and, if we are to believe the Secretary in his present mood, to expose the capital itself? *Who does not feel his blood tingle with shame as he reflects that all this disgrace has been brought upon us by a stroke of the pen from an official who possesses patriotism without discretion, and enthusiasm without judgment, and who is as ready to exaggerate the terrors of his work to day as he was to rush upon them yesterday?*

"The conclusion to which we are led is easily understood; and our readers will learn how deep are our convictions in this matter, when we take the step, unusual for us, of urging the removal of a Cabinet officer. Massachusetts will respond promptly to the call of the country. Her sons will leave the plough, the hammer, and the forge, as they have done before, as they are doing now, and will rush to the defence of the nation. *But she has a right to demand, and we believe that by the majority of her people she does* DEMAND, *that this waste of the national strength and enthusiasm should end; that Mr. Stanton should vacate a department which he has proved himself incompetent to fill, and should make way for some officer who will not undertake to manage for our Generals in the field when sitting in his chair in the War Office, who will not ruin our campaigns by his interference, and whose vision extends beyond the department of the Rappahannock.* The country is pouring out its blood and treasure without stint; and it has a right to demand, and we believe does demand, that the fruit of months of labor, purchased by the lives of many brave men, by inconceivable toil and expense, should not thus be lightly thrown away like an empty husk; and that, at the moment when all seemed to prosper, the nation should not suddenly have to endure the shame and the danger, as regards our foreign relations, of a piteous appeal to save its capital. The nation cannot afford to have the war protracted, by a management which thus sacrifices every success, and tells the people of the Southern States that even victory does not make it certain that a Union army will maintain its position. Let the country have a military administration as judicious and steady as Mr. Lincoln's civil policy, and all will be well, and success will be not only sure but speedy. *But let the War Department continue to be managed haphazard, with more thought of making and unmaking Presidents than of finishing the war*, without any steady plan, or judgment, or deference to those who have, and guided only by energy that has no balance and self-confidence that has no limit, and for our own part we must thank Providence that the future is hidden from us, and that we are left to the sufficient evil of the day."

To-day this paper would denounce as "factious" (if not disloyal) any member of the Opposition which should hold such a style of language towards the Chief Magistrate and his immediate subordinates in executive command. And we are free to say that such crimination and such dictation are to be cited only for the purpose of showing the lengths to which Republican partisans feel it safe to go in pursuit of their own personal and political resentments, while carping at the loyalty and patriotism of men who, with all the faults they may have ascribed to the Administration, never presumed to hold any such dictatorial and insulting language towards the constituted authorities of the land.

We know there were those who publicly exulted in the defeat of our armies before Richmond—some because of their political hatred towards Gen. McClellan, and others because they saw in such defeats the presage of an emancipation policy destined to be the *dernier resort* of the Administration. But we leave to the Boston Daily Advertiser the odium of the gratuitous imputations it has cast on the integrity of Mr. Stanton, when, in a matter which concerns the honor of his country and the lives of his fellow men, it charges him with prostituting his high office to schemes of President-making—merely remarking that, in justice to the Secretary, we are willing to believe, whatever may have been his military indiscretions, that such reflections on his integrity and patriotism are no more just than those in which this journal now habitually indulges with regard to better men who happen for the time to be its political opponents only because they do not vote for the retention in office of persons who, if it is to be believed, are unworthy to receive the support of honest and patriotic men in any party.

## MR. LINCOLN'S RECORD—No. III.

The opening of the spring campaign in 1862 had been crowned by a flood-tide of military successes, won in pursuit of the plans that had been deliberately marked out by Gen. McClellan. After he was removed from the control of our military affairs, and the Administration undertook to direct the movements of our armies by "orders" from Washington, confusion glided into our counsels, and all the operations most subject to its supervision, because nearest to Washington, were brought to nought. Instructed by this bitter experience of disaster, the President, it was hoped, would cease to meddle with matters too high for him, notwithstanding his experience in the Black Hawk war so highly prized by Mr. Raymond in writing Mr. Lincoln's biography. And this hope was confirmed when in July, 1862, it was announced that Gen. Halleck had been appointed General-in-Chief "to command the whole of the armies of the United States." When as yet this announcement was a mere rumor, Mr. Raymond wrote as follows in the New York Times of July 22, 1862:

"The rumor that Gen. Halleck has been summoned to Washington and is to be made commander-in-chief of the national armies has done something to revive the public hopes. If it proves to be true, and is not counteracted by rash and unwise experiments in other directions, it will contribute largely to that resurrection of the public faith which is essential to success. *It will give the country a guarantee that we are at last to have somewhere in the supreme military councils of the nation a man who knows something of the theory and practice of war.* Thus far, although the country has been at war for over a year, the supreme command of the army, *both in general and in detail, has been in the hands of civilians.* It will also give the country ground to hope that *unity of military counsels and action will at last be practically recognised as absolutely essential to the success of military operations.* The most consummate skill may be thwarted by the interference of incompetent superiors, and the most dauntless bravery may be rendered useless by the dissipation and waste of conflicting councils.

"That the President has long felt this necessity is sufficiently proved by the fact of his having undertaken to supply it himself. For the last few months he has been the actual, as well as theoretical, commander-in-chief of all our armies—directing their movements, adjusting their relative strength, fixing and ordering their combined action, and supervising their detailed operations in his own person. We have too much respect for Mr. Lincoln's good sense to suppose that he undertook this task from a conviction of his superior fitness for its performance. *No man knows better than himself that he is not a soldier, either by education or by natural genius and aptitude.* Nor is there any man in the country less likely to thrust himself needlessly into a position involving the most fearful responsibilities, which even the most venal and unscrupulous of his flatterers could not pretend that he was qualified to fill. The President felt the absolute necessity of *unity* in the military councils of the nation; and in default of any one else, he undertook to give them that unity himself. *He must feel that the experiment has not succeeded. The decisive test of generalship is success.* The army that wins the most victories is the army that has the best General at its head. And, judged by this standard, the rebels thus far have the advantage of the Union forces. They have deceived us, escaped us, and beaten us. What they have lacked in numbers they have made up in strategy. In vigor of movement, in rapidity of concentration, in the concealment of their plans until they were ripe for execution, in striking heavy blows on our weakest points, and in withdrawing their forces from every blow we have aimed at them, the rebels, judged by results, have shown themselves our masters in the art of war. *The reason of this, doubtless, is that* THEIR *President is a soldier.*"

This, be it remembered, is the deliberate criticism of Mr. Lincoln's biographer before Mr. Lincoln was the Republican candidate for re-election to the Presidency. In the year 1862 Mr. Raymond could see what mischief had ensued to the national cause because the President had undertaken to manage affairs for which he was not fitted "either by education or by natural genius and aptitude." In 1862 Mr. Raymond saw the advantage, in a time of war, of having a President who is a soldier. And if he does not see these things as clearly to-day as two years ago, it is only because the Baltimore Convention happened to re-nominate, as "the party candidate," a man whom he can warmly support only by ignoring his former convictions. There are very many who are like-minded with him.

In the same article from which we have quoted as above the Times added as follows:

"It is for the President to designate the successive steps to victory—to mark out the specific points that are to be occupied and held by the armies of the Union. *But with that his interference should end. Neither Gen Halleck, nor any other man fit to fill that place, should take it without complete and absolute authority in every thing relating to the military operations of the war.* If his advice is to be asked, it should be followed. The country demands for the army, what the army itself requires, a *competent, absolute, and responsible head.* It will tolerate no back stairs confidant—no mere military wet-nurse for a civilian commander, *whether that civilian be the Secretary of War or the President of the United States.* All thoughts of personal etiquette and of titular dignity must give way to the supreme necessities of the country."

We all know how little the President or Gen. Halleck fulfilled the requirements thus suggested as proper for their guidance in their respective spheres. The President "meddled" as before whenever he had a mind to do so, and Gen. Halleck submitted to be treated by him as somebody or as nobody according to the President's pleasure. The first step of the new titular General-in-Chief was to recall Gen. McClellan from Harrison's Landing that he might take a "fresh start" against Richmond from Fredericksburg. It was in vain that Gen. McClellan protested and showed the disadvantages of the step—disadvantages so mournfully confirmed by the bitter experience of the country from that day to this. Whether Gen. Halleck acted at his own instance in this disastrous determination, or whether he was moved to it by the President, we are unable to say.

Then followed the rout of Gen Pope's mishandled forces, the tumultuous retreat into Washington, and the second fright of our authorities for their own safety and the safety of the city. In the mean time, Gen. McClellan had been left at Alexandria, under orders of the War Department, with control over nothing but such officers of his staff as remained with him and a few men in camp. On stating this fact to Gen. Halleck, who had several times insolently carped at him, the latter telegraphed:

WASHINGTON, AUGUST 31, 1862.

*Major Gen George B. McClellan:* Since receiving your despatch, relating to command, I have not been able to answer any not of absolute necessity. I have not seen the order as published, but will write you in the morning. You will retain the command of every thing in this vicinity not temporarily with Pope's army in the field. *I beg of you to assist me in this crisis with your ability and experience. I am entirely tired out.*

H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief.

It will be seen that misfortune had at last brought the General-in-Chief to write courteously and to "beg" for Gen McClellan's assistance in this "crisis," when it was believed that the enemy would soon be thundering at the gates of Washington. "Help me, Cassius, or I sink," was the imploring cry of Gen. Halleck in this extremity. It was one day afterwards, on the 2d of September, 1862, that Gen. McClellan was restored to the command of the troops who loved him so well.

The order restoring him to the command of the army, and placing the fate of the nation in his hands, was made in writing. In Gen. McClellan's official report this order does not appear. It is given in a foot-note in the New York edition of Sheldon & Co. It was published in the National Intelligencer from an official copy on the day succeeding its date, and it was also published at the same time in the New York and other papers, having been sent from this city by telegraph. The order was as follows:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
*Washington, Sept. 2, 1862.*

*By direction of the President*, Major General McClellan will have command of the fortifications of Washington and of all the troops for the defence of the Capital.

*By order of the Secretary of War:*
E. D. TOWNSEND, A. A. General.

This order seems to have raised a storm among the enemies of McClellan, which neither the President nor the Secretary of War cared to face. Can it be possible that at this moment, when the fate of the nation was trembling in the balance, such political considerations controlled the movements of the highest officials?

It would seem so, for the order was re-published in an amended form, suppressing the names of the President and the Secretary of War, and so far relieving them from any apparent connection with the restoration of McClellan to the command. On the 3d of September a despatch was sent from Washington, stating that the order should read as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
*Washington, Sept. 2, 1862.*

Major General McClellan will have command of the fortifications of Washington and of all the troops for the defence of the Capital.

*By command of Major General Halleck:*
E. D. TOWNSEND, A. A. G.

We will let the New York Journal of Commerce tell the remainder of this pitiful episode:

"Why was this order couched in such dubious language? Every one remembers that it was not till explained by telegraph that the people even understood that McClellan was in command of the whole Army of the Potomac. It was undoubtedly ingeniously worded to avoid the storm of radical indignation which was anticipated. Instead of a frank noble order, expressing clearly the duties of the General on whom the very destiny of the republic was that day reposed, we have this ingenious phraseology sent forth to the nation to deceive them into the idea that McClellan was only placed in command of the forts. So the radical papers declared at the time. It was only Gen. Halleck's order placing McClellan in the fortifications—just the work he was suited for!

"Under that order, ingeniously worded, and under no other order or word of command from President, Secretary of War, or Gen. Halleck, bearing no authority but that which this tricked-up form of words doubtfully gave him, Gen. McClellan led the army into Maryland and gained the victories of South Mountain and Antietam. Halleck, it will be borne in mind, expressly told McClellan, in his despatch of October 26, 1862: 'Since you left Washington * * I have given you no orders.' Neither had any one else up to the close of Antietam. The simple truth was that McClellan, the only man in Washington fit for the occasion, as the inaction of every one else abundantly confessed, having been charged with the defence of the capital, mounted his horse when he thought the time a proper one, and went into the field to victory and the salvation of the capital and of the nation. President, Secretary of War, Halleck, all were paralyzed so far as any thing they said or did remains to indicate. They looked idly on while McClellan saved them and the country. Halleck, indeed, sent grumbling thunder after him over the wires. Thus on the 9th September Halleck telegraphs:

"Until we have better advices about the number of the enemy at Draineseville I think we must be very cautious about stripping too much the forts on the Virginia side."

"Again on the 13th he growls: 'You are wrong in thus uncovering the capital.' Again on the 14th: 'Scouts report a large force still on the Virginia side of the Potomac. If so, I fear you are exposing your left and rear.' Again on the 16th, at 12 30 P. M., Halleck telegraphs: 'I think you will find that the whole force of the enemy in your front has crossed the river. I fear now more than ever that they will re-cross at Harper's Ferry or below and turn your left, thus cutting you off from Washington.'

"One can imagine the smile of McClellan as he read that last despatch amid the thunders of the cannon on the evening of the 16th—the evening before Antietam. And Halleck, after these daily fits of tremor and nervousness about McClellan's uncovering the capital; after despatch on despatch, begging McClellan not to get so far off from the capital and leave them to the invasion of the rebels; after discouraging every step of McClellan's advance in Maryland up to the hour of the victory at Antietam, this same Gen. Halleck complained of the slow advance of McClellan in Maryland!—talked about the astonishing fact that he marched only a few miles a day! and wrote an official report assuming the credit of the campaign, saying that 'McClellan *was directed* to pursue him' (the enemy) into Maryland after Pope's defeat. No such direction was given, but the whole Maryland campaign stands out as the work of McClellan, untrammelled only because the people in Washington were so thoroughly frightened that for once they permitted a military man to conduct a campaign on his own plans.

"But what is to be said of the treatment these same men gave McClellan when he had relieved them from their fright and saved the capital and the nation?"

It was with such "a fire in his rear" that Gen. McClellan fought and won the battles of South Mountain and Antietam. Nobody has forgotten how these victories electrified the country. They came at a moment when the popular mind was weltering in the Slough of Despond. The nation was again placed on its feet, and felt solid ground beneath its tread, where before all had been doubt and uncertainty.

For a time the enemies of McClellan were silenced. What fear had done for him after the repulse and rout of Pope was now done for him by this demonstration of capacity and skill, too powerful to be resisted while its spell was on the public mind. Yet there were those who even then blurted out their censures upon him because he had not utterly "annihilated" the army of Lee. (It was and is so common for armies in our war to be "annihilated.") And when he paused long enough to provide his worn and destitute troops with the supplies rendered necessary by their forced withdrawal from Harrison's Landing, the disorderly retreat under Gen. Pope, and the march to Antietam, with the waste of clothing and material incident to bloody battles, fresh clamors were raised against him by the same insensate faction which had been the evil genius of the Administration.

On the 26th of October, 1862, Gen. McClellan commenced a new forward movement against the enemy. All things were ready for fresh successes. If with a broken and defeated army, whose shattered fragments he had consolidated while on the march to Antietam, Gen. McClellan had wrested victory from the army of Lee, elated by its recent successes over Pope, what might not the country have expected from the gallant Army of the Potomac, under the lead of its favorite commander, now that with replenished columns and flushed with triumph, it was marching to fresh conflicts with the discomfitted foe?

The advance was made by Gen. McClellan with great celerity. On November 7th Gen. Pleasonton, who commanded the van of the army, had stationed his pickets on the Hazel river, within six miles of Culpeper. By the strategy of Gen. McClellan the army of Gen. Lee had been effectually out-generalled, and was in a position where, if defeated, all retreat on its base was impossible. Moreover, the insurgent army had been cut in two by the line of Gen. McClellan's advance. On this point Gen. Pleasonton says:

"From the 7th instant (November, 1862) my advance pickets were on Hazel river, within six miles of Culpeper. . . . . The information gained by numerous patrols, and also from deserters, prisoners, contrabands, as well as citizens, established the fact of Longstreet, with his command, being at Culpeper, while Jackson, with D. H. Hill, with their respective commands, were in the Shenandoah Valley, on the western side of the Blue Ridge."

While such was the attitude of the contending forces, while Gen. McClellan was in the mid-career of his rapid forward movement, the order came for his removal—an order emanating this time not from Gen. Halleck, as in the case of the order for McClellan's appointment to take command of the forces routed under Gen. Pope, but from the President himself. It was as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
*Washington, November 5, 1862.*

GENERAL ORDER, No. 182.—By direction of the President of the United States it is ordered that Major Gen. McClellan be relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and that Major Gen. Burnside take command of that army.

By order of the Secretary of War:
E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adj't. Gen.

On the 3d of July, 1862, after Gen. McClellan's masterly withdrawal of his army to the James river—a withdrawal made necessary by no act of his, but by the acts of the Administration which had disconcerted all his plans—the President wrote to him:

"I am satisfied that yourself, officers, and men have done the best you could. All accounts say better fighting was never done. *Ten thousand thanks for it.*"

Two days afterwards, when Mr. Lincoln had received fuller information, he addressed the following just commendation to Gen. McClellan:

WASHINGTON, JULY 5, 1862.

Major General GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Commanding Army of the Potomac: *A thousand thanks* for the relief your two despatches of 12 and 1 P. M. yesterday gave me. Be assured the heroism of yourself, officers, and men is *and forever will be appreciated.* A. LINCOLN.

On the 15th of September, 1862, after he had received intelligence of the successes at South Mountain, the President wrote to Gen. McClellan:

"Your despatch of to-day received. God bless you and all with you! Destroy the rebel army, if possible.

"A. LINCOLN."

On the 30th of September, 1862, two weeks after the victories of South Mountain and Antietam, Gen. Halleck, having maturely considered the late battles, thought it not proper to bestow on Gen. McClellan and his gallant army any terms of praise less stinted than the following:

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 30, 1864.

*Major Gen McClellan, Commanding, etc.*

GENERAL: Your report of yesterday, giving the results of the battles of South Mountain and Antietam, has been received and submitted to the President. *They were not only hard fought battles*, BUT WELL-EARNED AND DECIDED VICTORIES.

The valor and endurance of your army in the several conflicts which terminated in the expulsion of the enemy from the loyal State of Maryland are creditable alike to the troops and to the officers who commanded them.

*A grateful country, while mourning the lamented dead, will not be unmindful of the honors due to the living.*

H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief.

What wonder that the removal of such a commander in the full tide of his successful career was received with equal astonishment by the army, which, as Mr. Everett says, "idolized him," and by the loyal people of the country, who, with the exception of "the radical contemners of experience and science in military affairs," had come to repose in him an abiding confidence? And hence it was that intelligent and patriotic supporters of the Administration, like Senator Harris, of New York, condemned the ill-advised step as inexplicable. Two days after Gen. McClellan's removal, that Senator, on entering his class room, and before proceeding with his lecture on law, being asked what was his opinion as to the removal of McClellan, said:

"The removal of McClellan has surprised and grieved me. I think it is a great mistake. I regarded him as the ablest General the war has yet brought to notice. I am not aware of any sufficient grounds for this step."

And to this day it is the judgment of the American people, as it will be the judgment of history, that there were "no sufficient grounds for this step." That McClellan was removed for political rather than military reasons has long been suspected, but the fact is now placed beyond dispute by the announcement made in a public speech delivered in New York on the 27th of September, by the Hon. Montgomery Blair, the late Postmaster General, and who, as a member of the Cabinet, has possessed in a remarkable degree the confidence of the President. Mr. Blair stated in that speech that Mr. Lincoln "had concerted with Gen. Grant to bring Gen. McClellan again into the field as his adjunct, if he turned his back on the proposals of the peace junto at Chicago;" that is, the phrase being translated out of the dialect of partisanship into plain every-day speech, the President of the United States, with General McClellan's military career fully before him, still thinks so highly of Gen. McClellan as a military commander that he had "concerted" with Gen. Grant to bring that officer "again into the field *as Gen. Grant' adjunct*," provided he would not accept the nomination of the Chicago Convention, and thereby come into competition with Mr. Lincoln's Presidential aspirations. We ask the American people to mark this most astounding statement, and to draw from it their own deductions. What shall be said of an Executive who, at a time when, as Mr. Everett justly says, "he should assume a position, alike in civil and military affairs, wholly independent of party," "concerts" with the Lieutenant General for the appointment of Gen. McClellan to a most important command, not from considerations of military fitness, but from considerations of political rivalship? And what now shall be said of the calumnious imputations on Gen. McClellan's military capacity when it is seen that President Lincoln, with his full knowledge of Gen McClellan's military history, was ready to make him Gen. Grant's "adjunct" if only the Chicago nomination were declined? Alas, alas! for the Republic in which such things are not only "concerted" but published to the world as illustrating the maxims of partisanship on which the Government is administered at this solemn hour in its history.

As before recited, the command of the Army of the Potomac was devolved on Gen. Burnside by the order of the President under date of November 7, 1862. Gen. Burnside was not born to this greatness nor had he achieved it. It was thrust upon him sorely against his will under an honest consciousness of his want of qualification for the post and under the equally honest conviction that Gen. McClellan could command the Army of the Potomac better than any General in it. To this effect he bore testimony under oath as follows on his appearance before the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War. He said:

"This order was conveyed to me by Gen. Buckingham, who was attached to the War Department. After getting over my surprise, the shock, &c., I told Gen. Buckingham that it was a matter that required very serious thought; *that I did not want the command; that it had been offered to me twice before, and I did not feel that I could take it.* I counselled with two of my staff officers in regard to it for, I should think, an hour and a half. They urged upon me that I had no right, as a soldier, to disobey the order, and that I had already expressed to the Government my unwillingness to take the command; I told them what my views were with reference to my ability to exercise such a command, which views were those I had unreservedly expressed, *that I was not competent to command such a large army as this;* I had said the same over and over again to the President and Secretary of War; and also that if matters could be satisfactorily arranged with Gen McClellan *I thought he could command the Army of the Potomac better than any other General in it.*"

The delays and blunders which preceded the battle of Fredericksburg, and the disastrous issue of that battle on the 13th of November, 1862, proved how just had been Gen. Burnside's misgivings in accepting the command of such a large army. And well might the President exclaim, as he is reported to have done when the news of that bloody repulse was brought to him, "If there is any body out of hell who experiences the torments of the damned I am that man." The appointment of Gen. Burnside was his work, done with the "best intentions," doubtless, but without that sound discretion which could alone justify the choice that was made. As a selection, it seems, was to be made from the several corps commanders of the army, the choice, with that curious infelicity which has marked some other arrangements of the Administration in the conduct of the war, was directed precisely to that corps commander who, from his recent connexion with the Army of the Potomac, knew the least about its constitution and the distribution of its forces at the time he was charged with its control. On this point Gen. Burnside spoke as follows in his testimony before designated:

"I had previously commanded but one corps, upon the extreme right and in the advance since the campaign had begun. *I probably knew less than any other corps commander of the positions and relative strength of the several corps of the army.* Gen. McClellan remained some two or three days to arrange his affairs, and came with me as far as Warrenton, and then left, having given me all the information he could in reference to the army."

How the "loyal" organs of the Administration received the disaster of Burnside may be read in such comments as follow. We quote from the New York Evening Post of December 18, 1862:

"How long is such intolerable and wicked blundering to continue? What does the President wait for? We hear that a great, a horrible crime has been committed; we do not hear that those guilty of it are under arrest; we do not hear even that they are to be removed from the places of trust which they have shown themselves so incapable to fill. What does the President wait for? *He* knows who was in fault; *he* knows whose ignorance, or incapacity, or treason it was which has brought this needless shame and sorrow upon the American people. Let him do his duty, and that at once; let him show the people, who look to him, that he conceals nothing, that he protects no guilt, that he favors no incapacity, that he stands between no criminal and justice."

In order to show the reader how our military affairs were managed during Burnside's administration of the Army of the Potomac, we may take a single example, furnished by the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

It appears that on the 26th of December, 1862, an order was issued for the entire command of Gen. Burnside to be in a condition to move at twelve hours' notice. Shortly after that order was issued Gen. John Newton and Gen. John Cochrane came up to Washington on leave of absence. Previous to obtaining leave of absence from Gen. Franklin, they informed him and Gen. William F. Smith that when they came to Washington they should take the opportunity to represent to some one in authority the dispirited condition of the army, and the danger there was in attempting *any movement* against the enemy at that time. Of the particular movement planned by Gen. Burnside they had no knowledge. While in the city they sought and obtained an interview with the President, and the purport and results of that interview are described by the committee as follows:

"Gen. Newton opened the subject to the President. At first the President, as Gen Newton expresses it, 'very naturally conceived that they had come there for the purpose of injuring Gen. Burnside, and suggesting some other person to fill his place.' Gen. Newton states that, while he firmly believed that the principal cause of the dispirited condition of the army was the want of confidence in the military capacity of Gen. Burnside, he deemed it improper to say so to the President 'right square out,' and therefore endeavored to convey the same idea indirectly. When asked if he considered it any less improper to do such a thing indirectly than it was to do it directly, he qualified his previous assertion by saying th t his object was to inform the President of what he considered to be the condition of the army, in the hope that the President would make inquiry and learn the true cause for himself. Upon perceiving this impression upon the mind of the President, Gens. Newton and Cochrane state that they hastened to assure the President that he was entirely mistaken, *and so far succeeded that at the close of the interview the President said to them he was glad th y had called upon him and that he hoped that good would result from the interview.*

"To return to Gen. Burnside. The cavalry expedition had started; the brigade of infantry detailed to accompany it had crossed the Rappahannock at Richard's Ford, and returned by way of Ellis's Ford, leaving the way clear for the cavalry to cross at Kelly's Ford. The day they had arranged to make the crossing General Burnside received from the President the following telegram: '*I have good reason for saying that you must not make a general movement without letting me know of it*'

"Gen. Burnside stated that he could not imagine, at the time, what reason the President could have for sending him such a telegram. None of the officers of his command, except one or two of his staff who had remained in camp, had been told any thing of his plan beyond the simple fact that a movement was to be made. He could only suppose that the despatch related in some way to important military movements in other parts of the country in which it was necessary to have co-operation.

"Upon the receipt of that telegram steps were immediately taken to halt the cavalry expedition where it then was at (Kelley's Ford) until further orders. A portion of it was shortly afterwards sent off to intercept Stuart, who had just made a raid to Dumfries and the neighborhood of Fairfax court-house, which it failed to do.

"Gen. Burnside came to Washington to ascertain from the President the true state of the case. He was informed by the President that some general officers from the army of the Potomac, *whose names he declined to give*, had called upon him and represented that Gen. Burnside contemplated soon making a movement, and that the army was so dispirited and demoralized that any attempt to make a movement at that time must result in disaster; that no prominent officers in the Army of the Potomac were in favor of any movement at that time.

"Gen. Burnside informed the President that none of his officers had been informed what his plan was, *and then proceeded to explain it in detail to the President.* He urged upon the President to grant him permission to carry it out, *but the President declined to do so at that time.* Gen. Halleck and Secretary Stanton were sent for, *and then learned, for the first time, of the President's action in stopping the movement*, although Gen. Halleck was previously aware that a movement was contemplated by Gen. Burnside. Gen. Halleck, with Gen. Burnside, held that the officers who had made those representations to the President should be at once dismissed the service.

"Gen. Burnside remained here at that time for two days, but no conclusion was reached upon the subject. When he returned to his camp he learned *that many of the details of the general movement and the details of the cavalry expedition had become known to the rebel sympathizers in Washington, thereby rendering that p an impracticable.* When asked to whom he had communicated his plans, *he stated that had told no one in Washington except the President, Secretary Stanton, and Gen. Halleck;* and in his camp none knew of it except one or two of his staff officers, *who had remained in camp all the time.* He professed himself unable to tell how his plans had become known to the enemy."

Let us recapitulate the facts set forth in this narrative: Two officers, in performing a service for which they deserved, in the judgment of Mr. Stanton and Gen. Halleck, to be at once dismissed from the army, succeed in so far winning the ear of the President that "he said to them he was glad they had called upon him, and that he hoped good would result from the interview." The actual result of the interview was an order of the President suspending the operations of Gen. Burnside, because, as he said, "he had good reason" for demanding such a suspension, alluding to the representations confidentially made by Gens. Cochrane and Newton, and which, whatever may have been the informality of their communication, were accepted by the President as furnishing "good reasons" for holding Gen. Burnside in check. That is, the President adopted their reasons as his own, and thus threw over the heads of the officers making these statements the protecting shield of the Commander-in-Chief. To have afterwards punished them for making communications on which he had acted would have been, of course, to stultify himself and wrong the officers with whom he had made himself *particeps criminis* if any crime had been committed.

But the matter did not end here. The committee report that Gen. Burnside repaired to Washington and proceeded to explain to the President the details of the plan. The President, still under the influence of the representations confidentially made by the officers whose names he declined to give, refused his assent to Gen. Burnside's project. And it is while matters are at this stage that Gen. Halleck (who nominally held the office of General-in-Chief while the President performed its duties in critical junctures) learned for the first time of the President's action in stopping the movement. Gen. Burnside remained in Washington two days, confided the details of his plans to nobody in Washington except the President, Secretary Stanton, and Gen. Halleck, and then returned to his army only to find that these details had become known to "rebel sympathizers" in Washington, and that thereby his plan was rendered impracticable. It is not directly charged that the President, Gen. Halleck, or Mr. Stanton had exposed these military secrets, but, as it is stated that nobody in Gen. Burnside's army knew what they were except one or two staff officers "who had remained in camp all the time," the committee leave the necessary inference to be drawn that the "rebel sympathizers" in this city had obtained their news directly or indirectly through one or other or all of the high functionaries above designated.

We think it will be admitted that the President should not have appointed General Burnside to the command of the army, or have retained him in such command after he had so far forfeited the confidence of the Administration that his movements could be arrested at the unofficial and clandestine suggestion of two of his subordinate officers. This is not only a matter of decorum but a plain and elementary principle of military administration.

In the second place, this episode serves to set in a clear light the undefined nature of the position held by Gen. Halleck under the then existing military system of the Administration, if that can be called a system where system there was none. We have the spectacle of a General-in-Chief who, though apprized that Gen. Burnside meditated a movement, was not apprized by the President that the